



# Australian Bureau of Statistics

## 6291.0.55.001 - Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Delivery, Sep 2008

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### Summary

#### Main Features

Data from the monthly Labour Force Survey are released in two stages. The **Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Delivery** (cat. no. 6291.0.55.001) and **Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Quarterly** (cat. no. 6291.0.55.003) are part of the second release, and include detailed data not contained in the **Labour Force, Australia** (cat. no. 6202.0) product set, which is released one week earlier.

The **Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Delivery** (cat. no. 6291.0.55.001) is released monthly. **Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Quarterly** (cat. no. 6291.0.55.003) includes data only collected in February, May, August and November (including industry and occupation).

Since these products are based on the same data as the **Labour Force, Australia** (cat. no. 6202.0) publication, the **6202.0 Labour Force, Australia Main Features** are relevant to both releases.

#### About this Release

A range of Excel spreadsheets and SuperTABLE datacubes. The monthly spreadsheets contain broad level data covering all the major items of the Labour Force Survey in time series format, including seasonally adjusted and trend estimates. The monthly datacubes contain more detailed and cross classified original data than the spreadsheets.

### Explanatory Notes

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## Quality Declaration - Summary

### INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Labour Force statistics are compiled from the Labour Force Survey which is conducted each month throughout Australia as part of the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) household survey program. For information on the institutional environment of the ABS, including the legislative obligations of the ABS, financing and governance arrangements, and mechanisms for scrutiny of ABS operations, please see ABS Institutional Environment.

### RELEVANCE

The Labour Force Survey provides monthly information about the labour market activity of Australia's resident civilian population aged 15 years and over. The Labour Force Survey is designed to primarily provide estimates of employment and unemployment for the whole of Australia and, secondarily, for each state and territory.

### TIMELINESS

The Labour Force Survey interviews are generally conducted during the two weeks beginning on the Sunday between the 5th and 11th of each month. The information obtained relates to the week before the interview (i.e. the reference week). Each year, to deal with operational difficulties involved with collecting and processing the Labour Force Survey around the Christmas and New Year holiday period, interviews for December start four weeks after November interviews start, and January interviews start five weeks after December interviews start. As a result, January interviewing may commence as early as the 7th or as late as the 13th, depending on the year. Occasionally, circumstances that present significant operational difficulties for survey collection can result in a change to the normal pattern for the start of interviewing.

Key estimates from the Labour Force Survey are published in two stages. *Labour Force, Australia* (cat. no. 6202.0) and *Labour Force, Australia, Spreadsheets* (cat. no. 6202.0.55.001) are the first release. These data are released 32 days after the commencement of enumeration for the month, with the exception of estimates for December which are published 39 days after the commencement of enumeration.

Detailed data which were not part of the first release from the Labour Force Survey are published in *Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 6291.0.55.001) and *Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Quarterly* (cat. no. 6291.0.55.003), which are released one week after the initial release.

## **ACCURACY**

The Labour Force Survey is based on a sample of private dwellings (approximately 22,800 houses, flats etc) and non-private dwellings, such as hotels and motels. The sample covers about 0.24% of the Australian Population. The Labour Force Survey is designed primarily to provide estimates of key labour force statistics for the whole of Australia and, secondarily, for each state and territory.

Two types of error are possible in an estimate based on a sample survey: non-sampling error and sampling error.

Non-sampling error arises from inaccuracies in collecting, recording and processing the data. Every effort is made to minimise reporting error by the careful design of questionnaires, intensive training and supervision of interviewers, and efficient data processing procedures. Non-sampling error also arises because information cannot be obtained from all persons selected in the survey. The Labour Force Survey receives a high level of cooperation, with an average response rate for the last year being 97%.

Sampling error occurs because a sample, rather than the entire population, is surveyed. One measure of the likely difference resulting from not including all dwellings in the survey is given by the standard error. There are about two chances in three that a sample estimate will differ by less than one standard error from the figure that would have been obtained if all dwellings had been included in the survey, and about nineteen chances in twenty that the difference will be less than two standard errors.

Standard errors of key estimates and movements since the previous month are available in *Labour Force, Australia* (cat. no. 6202.0). The standard error of other estimates and movements may be calculated by using the spreadsheet contained in *Labour Force Survey Standard Errors, Data Cube* (cat. no. 6298.0).

## **COHERENCE**

The ABS has been conducting the Labour Force Survey each month since February 1978. While seeking to provide a high degree of consistency and comparability over time by minimising changes to the survey, sound survey practice requires careful and continuing maintenance and development to maintain the integrity of the data and the efficiency of the collection.

The changes which have been made to the Labour Force Survey have included changes in sampling methods, estimation methods, concepts, data item definitions, classifications, and time series analysis techniques. In introducing these changes the ABS has generally revised previous estimates to ensure consistency and coherence with current estimates. For a full list of changes made to the Labour Force Survey see *Labour Statistics: Concepts, Sources and Methods* (cat. no. 6102.0.55.001) Table 20.2.

## **INTERPRETABILITY**

The key estimates from the Labour Force Survey are available as original, seasonally adjusted and trend series. Seasonal adjustment is a means of removing the effects of normal seasonal variation from the series so other influences on the series can be more clearly recognised. Seasonal adjustment does not aim to remove the irregular influences which may be present and therefore month-to-month movements may not be reliable

indicators of underlying behaviour. To assist in interpreting the underlying behaviour, the ABS produces the trend series by smoothing the seasonally adjusted series to reduce the impact of the irregular component. For further information, see *A Guide to Interpreting Time Series - Monitoring Trends* (cat. no. 1349.0).

Further information on the terminology and other technical aspects associated with statistics from the Labour Force Survey can be found in the publication *Labour Force, Australia* (cat. no. 6202.0), which contains detailed Explanatory Notes, Standard Error information and a Glossary.

## ACCESSIBILITY

Please see the Related Information tab for the list of products that are available from this collection.

## Data Cubes (I-Note) - Data Cubes

**20/10/2008 Low Level Correction to fix table title names text in historical Datacubes and a text error in a reference on the Main Features. The data in *Labour Force, Australia: Labour Force Status and Other Characteristics of Families, September 2008*(cat. no. 6224.0.55.001) is not affected.**

In September 2008, an improved method for calculating families estimates was introduced. As a result, information from the following groups will now contribute to the family estimates published in datacubes FA1 to FA5:

- households containing permanent members of the Australian defence forces
- households containing usual residents of private dwellings who fail to meet LFS selection rules (for example, because they are away from their usual residence for more than six weeks) and
- households which did not fully respond to the survey (as long as all demographic and family type variables are available).

Detailed information on the improved method is provided in Information Paper: Improvements to Family Estimates from the Labour Force Survey (cat. no. 6224.0.55.002).

Additionally, the frequency of the release has changed from annual release to monthly.

Since these products are based on the same data as the **Labour Force, Australia** (cat. no. 6202.0) product set, the **6202.0 Labour Force, Australia Main Features** are relevant to both releases.

## Standard Errors

### Standard Errors

Estimates from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) are based on information collected from people in a sample of dwellings, rather than the entire population. Hence the estimates produced may differ from those that would have been produced if the entire population had

been included in the survey. The most common measure of the likely difference (or 'sampling error') is the **standard error** (SE). New models for calculating standard errors for these estimates were introduced in July 2008, due to the 2008 sample reduction.

The ABS considers that estimates with a relative standard error of 25% or more may be subject to sampling variability too high for most practical purposes.

To determine if an item has a relative standard error of 25% or more, in SuperTABLE, right click in the centre of the table, select annotate cells - standard annotations, and select 'Annotate RSE cut-off values'.

To indicate those cells in spreadsheets with a relative standard error of 25% or more, annotations have been applied prior to dissemination.

In addition, the tables below have been supplied to show estimates at which the relative standard error is 25%. Estimates of the size indicated in the tables, or smaller, are considered to be subject to sampling variability too high for most practical purposes.

Additional information on how standard errors for LFS estimates are produced is available in [Labour Force Survey Standard Errors, Data Cube](#) (cat. no. 6298.0.55.001).

State	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
<b>Employed</b>									
Feb 78 to Sep 82	4.5	4.5	3.5	2.5	2.5	1.5	2.0	2.0	4.5
Oct 82 to Aug 87	4.0	4.0	3.0	1.8	2.0	1.0	1.8	1.3	3.5
Sep 87 to Aug 92	4.5	4.5	3.0	2.0	2.5	1.3	1.8	1.5	4.0
Sep 92 to Aug 97	5.3	4.6	3.5	2.4	2.9	1.3	1.3	1.0	4.0
Sep 97 to Mar 01	5.9	4.5	4.1	2.4	2.8	1.1	1.0	1.1	4.4
Apr 01 to Oct 07	4.9	4.1	3.7	2.0	2.3	1.1	1.4	1.1	4.9
Nov 07	5.0	4.1	3.8	2.0	2.4	1.2	1.3	1.1	5.0
Dec 07	5.0	4.2	3.9	2.0	2.4	1.2	1.2	1.1	5.0
Jan 08	5.1	4.3	3.9	2.1	2.5	1.2	1.2	1.2	5.1
Feb 08	5.2	4.4	4.0	2.1	2.6	1.2	1.1	1.2	5.1
Mar 08	5.4	4.4	4.1	2.1	2.9	1.2	1.0	1.2	5.2
Apr 08	5.5	4.6	4.5	2.2	3.0	1.2	0.9	1.3	5.3
May 08	5.5	4.7	4.5	2.3	3.1	1.3	0.9	1.3	5.4
Jun 08	5.6	4.8	4.6	2.3	3.2	1.3	0.9	1.3	5.4
Jul 08 onwards	7.0	6.0	5.7	2.9	4.0	1.6	1.0	1.6	7.7
<b>Unemployed</b>									
Feb 78 to Sep 82	4.5	4.5	3.5	2.5	2.5	1.5	2.0	2.0	4.5
Oct 82 to Aug 87	4.0	4.0	3.0	1.8	2.0	1.0	1.8	1.3	3.5
Sep 87 to Aug 92	4.5	4.5	3.0	2.0	2.5	1.3	1.8	1.5	4.0
Sep 92 to Aug 97	5.3	4.6	3.5	2.4	2.9	1.3	1.3	1.0	4.0
Sep 97 to Mar 01	5.9	4.5	4.1	2.4	2.8	1.1	1.0	1.1	4.4
Apr 01 to Oct 07	5.7	4.9	4.2	2.7	3.0	1.7	2.4	1.5	4.7
Nov 07	5.8	5.0	4.3	2.8	3.2	1.7	2.2	1.6	4.8
Dec 07	5.9	5.1	4.4	2.8	3.3	1.7	1.9	1.6	4.8
Jan 08	6.0	5.3	4.5	2.9	3.4	1.7	1.8	1.7	4.9
Feb 08	6.2	5.4	4.7	3.0	3.6	1.8	1.6	1.7	4.9
Mar 08	6.4	5.5	4.8	3.0	3.9	1.8	1.5	1.8	5.0
Apr 08	6.5	5.8	5.2	3.2	4.1	1.8	1.4	1.9	5.1
May 08	6.6	5.9	5.3	3.3	4.3	1.9	1.3	2.0	5.2
Jun 08	6.8	6.1	5.5	3.3	4.5	1.9	1.3	2.1	5.2
Jul 08 onwards	8.9	8.0	7.3	4.4	6.0	2.5	1.6	2.7	7.5
<b>NILF</b>									
Feb 78 to Sep 82	4.5	4.5	3.5	2.5	2.5	1.5	2.0	2.0	4.5
Oct 82 to Aug 87	4.0	4.0	3.0	1.8	2.0	1.0	1.8	1.3	3.5

Sep 87 to Aug 92	4.5	4.5	3.0	2.0	2.5	1.3	1.8	1.5	4.0
Sep 92 to Aug 97	5.3	4.6	3.5	2.4	2.9	1.3	1.3	1.0	4.0
Sep 97 to Mar 01	5.9	4.5	4.1	2.4	2.8	1.1	1.0	1.1	4.4
Apr 01 to Oct 07	5.9	4.8	4.4	2.5	2.9	1.3	1.8	1.3	5.3
Nov 07	6.0	4.9	4.5	2.5	3.0	1.4	1.7	1.4	5.3
Dec 07	6.1	5.0	4.5	2.6	3.0	1.4	1.6	1.4	5.4
Jan 08	6.2	5.1	4.6	2.6	3.1	1.4	1.5	1.4	5.4
Feb 08	6.2	5.2	4.7	2.7	3.2	1.4	1.4	1.5	5.5
Mar 08	6.6	5.4	4.8	2.7	3.6	1.4	1.2	1.5	5.6
Apr 08	6.7	5.6	5.3	2.9	3.7	1.5	1.1	1.6	5.7
May 08	6.8	5.7	5.5	2.9	3.9	1.5	1.1	1.6	5.8
Jun 08	6.9	5.9	5.6	3.0	4.0	1.5	1.0	1.7	5.8
Jul 08 onwards	8.7	7.4	7.1	3.7	5.1	1.9	1.3	2.0	8.3

Capital City/Balance of State	Sep 92 to Aug 97	Sep 97 to Mar 01	Apr 01 to Oct 07	Nov 07 to Jun 08	From Jul 08
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Sydney Major Statistical Region	5.3	5.7	5.0	5.8	7.3
Balance of New South Wales Major Statistical Region	5.3	5.7	5.0	5.7	7.2
Melbourne Major Statistical Region	4.6	4.6	4.2	5.0	6.3
Balance of Victoria Major Statistical Region	4.6	4.3	4.1	4.9	6.1
Brisbane Major Statistical Region	3.5	3.7	3.5	4.3	5.4
Balance of Queensland Major Statistical Region	3.6	4.3	3.7	4.7	5.8
Adelaide Major Statistical Region	2.4	2.4	2.1	2.5	3.1
Balance of South Australia Major Statistical Region	2.5	2.2	2.0	2.4	2.9
Perth Major Statistical Region	2.9	2.6	2.5	3.4	4.2
Balance of Western Australia Major Statistical Region	2.9	2.8	2.3	3.2	4.0

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